



Diverse Friend Activities

Loneliness takes many forms. It can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnic background, or financial situation. Social interaction is important for people's health and well-being. To reduce loneliness, we need volunteer friends and increasingly diverse ways of providing social support. Volunteering in friend activities starts with participation in a Basic Course on Friend Activities.

Forms of Friend Activities

Friend activities are based on regional and local needs. They can be one-to-one or group-based, long-term or one-off, and take place face-to-face or online.

Friend activities bring much-needed positive relationships into people's lives. The most important aspect of the activity is simply being present. Together, people can, for example, have coffee, play games, go for walks, or run errands. Volunteers can also organize local groups, such as friendship groups for young people or recreational activities for older adults.

Approximately 45,400 people received support through friend activities, and around 9,000 people served as volunteers in friend activities in 2025.

Objectives of the Activity

- To respond to the needs of those seeking support through the activity, both face-to-face across Finland and nationwide online.
- To alleviate loneliness.
- To reduce social exclusion and feelings of not belonging.
- To strengthen people's well-being within their local communities.
- To provide opportunities for social interaction and support for those at risk of being left alone and who long for connection.
- To bring hope and joy to the everyday lives of lonely older people, young people, migrants, family caregivers, people with disabilities, residents of institutions, prisoners, and people recovering from mental health challenges.
- To enable encounters between generations and encourage everyone to take notice of the people around them.
- To be an important part of the Finnish Red Cross's preparedness to help.